Understanding Continuous Blood Glucose Monitoring (CGM)

You may have heard the term continuous blood glucose monitoring or been prescribed it by your diabetes care team.

But what is it and how is it different than other types of glucose monitoring?

Continuous blood glucose monitoring, also called CGM, is a monitoring system that checks glucose levels at regular intervals and transmits those values to a monitor.

By having multiple readings over the course of the day, you can better see how your medications (insulin doses), food choices, and physical activity are working together.

> *"The continuous glucose monitor sends data every five minutes; it's always-- you always see what your blood sugar is on the app but it updates it every five minutes so on the screen you'll see a trend and you'll see history-- where it is now and where it's going."*

This can help you make changes in your insulin dose to help keep your blood glucose in your target range.

CGM systems provide more blood glucose values with less finger sticks than regular blood glucose meters.

You will still have to check twice a day with a regular meter and see that both readings are the same.

If not make sure to contact your diabetes care team and follow their instructions.

> *"So for somebody that is checking their blood sugars and they are getting good numbers and yet their hemoglobin A1c is not where we would predict it would be based on those home glucose monitoring numbers, or somebody's having a high incidence of hypoglycemia or low blood sugars, a continuous glucose meter can allow you to see ones that may be hidden, happening in the middle of the night, or it can explain the differences and allow us to know when somebody's either going way out of control for their blood glucose or having lows that are going undetected."*

CGM systems have two main parts, a sensor that is inserted into the skin and stays on until replaced and a monitor that receives the blood glucose readings.

Depending on your type of CGM device some can directly link to your smartphone.

Some CGM systems will alert you if your blood glucose is out of your target range, so you can take action.

> *"So you can keep track of it, or if the CGM noticed that your sugar's rising really quickly or dropping really quickly, it actually will alert you that, "Hey, your sugar will be below 50 in 20 minutes." So that's really nice, so you can see the-- sometimes it makes you look at the pattern."*

Some CGMs can be linked directly to your doctor so they can see how your readings are.

> *"I don't have to be in a doctor's office; they could just log in. If I call my doctor up and say, "Hey, my blood sugar's been kind of crazy" my doctor can log in and see okay, what was going on at this time so they can view it remotely."*

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Your CGM sensor will need to be replaced every few days to a week. Talk with your healthcare provider to make sure you know when you need to change them out.

Continuous blood glucose monitoring measures your glucose levels throughout the day and night.

Working together with your diabetes care team and understanding these readings and how to act if you get an alert will help you keep your blood glucose levels in your target range and stay in control of your life.

Although Diabetes is complex, it's manageable when you have the right information and support. Diabetes educators are trained to be your diabetes expert and can help you learn how to successfully thrive with diabetes. You deserve nothing less!

Ask your provider for a referral today! Find one at www.DiabetesEducator.org/find.

